

## **Illinois Forestry Development Council Meeting – March 28, 2007**

Chair John Phelps called the meeting to order. Nine Council members and 10 Task Group members were present.

The January 17, 2007 meeting minutes were approved as submitted.

### Financial Report – Dick Little

Dick distributed a copy of the FY07 budget. There is a balance of \$21,671 that has not been allocated.

A copy of the Winter '06 issue of Illinois Steward was mailed to all Council members and the legislatures.

### Liaison Report – Dick Little

Participated in a conference call and attended a meeting in the Governor's office talking about nursery production.

Prepared a proposal for nursery production and staff.

As of March 12, 2007 there has been \$857,000 collected in the four percent harvest fee.

Dick distributed the following:

- The Ninth Annual Illinois Leadership Conference
- The Illinois Wildlife Action Plan
- Illinois County Acreage Summary
- Job announcement – USFS Vegetation Specialist
- Illinois Watershed River Day – September 15, 2007
- 95<sup>th</sup> Illinois General Assembly Spring2007 Calendar
- The new 2005 Illinois forestry report is out – <http://nrs.fs.fed.us/fia/>
- Official publication of the NWTf Hunting Heritage Club – “Get In The Game”
- Illinois FY07 EQIP Special Project – Forest Management Plans
- Illinois 95<sup>th</sup> General Assembly – Bills of interest
- Applying spatial analysis to forest policy evaluation

Chair John Phelps signed the agreement for the Middle Mississippi River Partnership.

The third annual Agricultural Day will be held April 21 at Southern Illinois University.

The first carbon credit initiative pool will be April 11 at Barnhart Prairie south of the U of I campus at 11:30 a.m.

Jay Hayek volunteered to look into a computer program for the carbon credit initiative.

Presentation – *Charles Ruffner, Associate Professor, Department of Forestry, Southern Illinois University.* Professor Ruffner gave a presentation on “Working to re-establish fire in oak ecosystems of the central hardwoods”.

### Old Business

#### **Woodland Assessment Tax Force – *John Phelps***

John attended the Woodland Assessment Tax Force meeting on March 27, 2007. The meeting was called to go over the recommendations. A subcommittee was formulated to recommend bullet points for the Task Force committee. The recommendations suggested were: establishing two new classifications of property, one which is called a passive land stewardship classification. This would apply to prairies, wetlands and non-productive forests and requires a minimum of 10 acres with no structures or improvements, and no maintenance. There would not be any type of a management plan associated with this. The passive land stewardship plan applies to acreages that fall under a list of criteria and the taxes on that particular type area would be 5 to 8 1/3 percent of fair market value which would be \$10 to \$17 an acre.

The second recommendation is called managed land stewardship which includes the above, but also the provision for the person to have some type of plan. The plan would be certified and approved by IDNR. It would be a minimum 10-year commitment, a minimum of five acres with a recapture of past taxes if you change your mind. The tax rate would be 2 to 8 1/3 percent of fair market value.

The next step suggested was to write up some legislation that cover these recommendations, have hearings about the legislation, get input from people and then have the legislation go through the House and Senate.

Kurt Bobsin, Mike Brunk, Jeff Dawson, Jay Hayek, Dick Little, Mike Mason, Joe Newcomb, John Phelps and Terry Weldin-Frisch met on January 31, 2007 to draft a position statement for the Council. The recommendation was to leave the Farm Assessment law and Forestry Farm Management Plan as it is and recommend that all other managed lands and forestlands be assessed at 8 1/3 percent the value of the property.

#### **Marketing Contacts – *Mike Brunk***

Mike presented a proposal from *MarketShare INFO*. This is a program that would help the Council communicate with the media and other interested constituents more effectively. Discussion followed. A motion was made to implement phase I for \$2500. Motion seconded. Motion carried.

Mike distributed copies of the new brochure “Under the Canopy”. The Urban Task Group developed this brochure from the Illinois Forestry Summit meeting.

**Follow-up on the Development Pressure Discussion – Terry Weldin-Frisch**

At the last meeting there was an extended discussion regarding the map that depicted Development Pressure on private forestland in Illinois. Specifically, the Council wanted to know whether the data utilized to produce the map was the best possible data to get a good picture of what is happening in Illinois, (i.e., are there other data that would give a better picture of the situation). In response to the Council's question about other data available, Terry volunteered to bring the question back to two of his best research people at DCEO and ask them what they thought. In talking with one of them, they pointed out that state produced population projections for Illinois are available if the model could be run again. They do know that the model can be re-run using state specific population projections by county and that the price for doing this is somewhere in the vicinity of \$3-\$5K. Discussion followed. It was decided to stay with the current analysis without the benefit of comparing to state specific data for now.

**New Business**

FY08 Budget – The Governor's budget that was presented to the House and Senate included the same budget for the Council as last year- \$118,500. A motion was made to continue the two traditional Council contracts for 2007-08. Motion was seconded. Motion carried.

**Agency Reports**

Forest Service – *John DePuy*

- ✓ The Shawnee National Forest is hoping to get their first timber sale project out. There are three alternatives: (1) no action, (2) shorter wood cut and prescribed fire, and (3) do the same, but leave the small trees in place.
- ✓ Forest Service is trying to resurrect a prescribed fire EIS (Environmental Impact Statement).
- ✓ The Illinois SAF 2007 Spring Meeting will be held April 18 & 19 in Effingham.
- ✓ Central States Soils Workshop will be held October 9-11, 2007 in Carbondale.

IWPA – *Dan Schmoker*

IWPA is trying to get new members. Jay Hayek will provide forestry training to those enrolled in the Game of Logging in Mt. Vernon and Fulton County.

Extension – *Jay Hayek*

- ✓ 500 paid attendance at the Tri-State Stewardship Conference in Sinsinawa, WI
- ✓ Big Tree Inspectors Workshop – April 21 – Kampsville, IL
- ✓ Big Tree Inspectors Workshop – June 16 – Morton Arboretum
- ✓ Big Tree Inspectors Workshop – September 22 – Allerton Park
- ✓ Jay volunteered to put together a marketing and utilization directory on the Emerald Ash borer in the northeast part of the state.
- ✓ Plan to attend the National Utilization & Marketing meeting in Wisconsin on June 4-7, 2007.

Wildlife Society – *Clay Nielson*

The Illinois State Chapter of the Wildlife Society is a state chapter of the National Society which is the professional association of wildlife biologists. There is 70-80 paid members in Illinois of wildlife biologists, fish and wildlife service, DNR, and universities. The primary activities include state meetings, different committees that focus on different aspects of wildlife management, and prepare position statements.

Department of Ag – *Elliot Lagacy*

Elliot distributed a handout on Emerald Ash Borer. The new address for the EAB webpage is: [www.illinoisEAB.com](http://www.illinoisEAB.com)

NRCS – *Kathy McTighe*

Kathy reported an update on the March 9 batching period for EQIP - they received an additional 328 pre-approved applications. This gives them a total of approximately 880 approved applications to get a forest management plan.

AISWCD – *Bob Sloan*

A forestry herbicide workshop was held in February in Stockton and was attended by 42 paid attendees. The Tree I.D. Workshop scheduled for March 16 at Dixon Springs was cancelled due to lack of participants. Jim Appleby has been invited to speak at the annual meeting on the Emerald Ash Borer.

IAA – *Mike Brunk*

Mike reported there was an IAA representative that was interested in the IFA. The Council teamed up with the IAA, as well as the Illinois Landscape Contractors Association and a number of other sponsors to put together “Under the Canopy” publication.

**FDA Changes** – *Dick Little*

Dick reported the FDA changes would not be introduced this year. The Speaker of the House suggests waiting until next year to make the changes because – 1) the FDA doesn't expire until 2008 and 2) knowing what this session will be like, it would get lost.

A Natural Resources Conference was scheduled for 2008, but was decided to wait until 2009. Illinois will host the National Fish and Wildlife Conference in December 2009.

Meeting adjourned.